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The CORN OF PLENTY OF HOME POEMS AND PICTURES

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FROM THE BEQUEST OF

Lucy Osgood

OF MEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS













"MERRY CHRISTMAS!" (See Miss Alcott's Poem, page 9.)





THE HORN OF PLENTY
OF
HOME POEMS AND HOME PICTURES



WITH NEW POEMS BY MISS LOUISA M. ALCOTT, MISS MULOCHE, JEAN INGELOW, AMELIA B. EDWARDS, MRS. KATE T. WOODS, DORA GREENWELL, AND OTHERS

PREFACE BY
SOPHIE MAY

AND ONE HUNDRED ILLUSTRATIONS, INCLUDING FIFTY FULL-PAGE PICTURES
BY EMINENT ARTISTS

BOSTON
WILLIAM F. GILL AND COMPANY
309 WASHINGTON ST., OPPOSITE OLD SOUTH CHURCH
1876

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Lucy Osgood fund

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TO ALL THE
LITTLE WOMEN AND LITTLE MEN

WHO HAVE BEEN MADE HAPPY BY "AUNT JO," WHO WISHES THEM "A MERRY
CHRISTMAS" IN THE INTRODUCTORY POEM OF THIS VOLUME,

"THE HORN OF PLENTY" IS INSCRIBED,
BY A WARM ADMIRER OF "LITTLE WOMEN" AND "LITTLE MEN."







PREFACE



HERE are some beautiful songs fresh from the hearts of poets who love children. The compiler has, in some cases, been limited in the choice of verses by the artists who have designed the pictures; but it seems to me that many of the poems are very sweet,—as sweet as the breath of flowers and the music of birds, but with a far deeper meaning. When the birds and flowers die we forget them: but poems speak of the soul; they sing themselves over and over again, and the best and truest ones live forever.

“The Little Ghost,” “Crippled Jane,” “A Story by the Fire”—read them, dear children, and you will always be happier for the recollection.

SOPHIE MAY.





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MERRY CHRISTMAS.



N the rush of early morning,
When the red burns through the gray,
And the wintry world lies waiting
For the glory of the day,
Then we hear a fitful rustling
Just without upon the stair,
See two small white phantoms coming,
Catch the gleam of sunny hair.

Are they Christmas fairies stealing
Rows of little socks to fill?
Are they angels floating hither
With their message of good-will?
What sweet spell are these elves weaving,
As like larks they chirp and sing?
Are these palms of peace from heaven
That these lovely spirits bring?

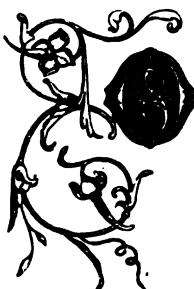
Rosy feet upon the threshold,
Eager faces peeping through,
With the first red ray of sunshine,
Chanting cherubs come in view:
Mistletoe and gleaming holly,
Symbols of a blessed day,
In their chubby hands they carry,
Streaming all along the way.

Well we know them, never weary
Of this innocent surprise;
Waiting, watching, listening always
With full hearts and tender eyes,
While our little household angels,
White and golden in the sun,
Greet us with the sweet old welcome,—
“Merry Christmas, every one!”

Louisa M. Alcott.



ONCE A YEAR.



H the joy of Christmas time !
Children singing,
Laughter ringing,
Gifts around, and jokes abound !
Who can tell what will appear
At this season of good cheer,
Coming to us once a year ?

Oh the joy of Christmas time !
Gifts are hidden,
Guests are bidden,
Secret nods, and knowing winks ;
Father slyly looks at mother,
Children wonder "what she thinks ;"
Secrets filled with loving cheer,
Coming only once a year.

Oh the joy of Christmas time !
In the morning,
Ere the dawning,
Babes are waking, all are taking
Gifts from loved ones far and near ;
Young and old are merry-making :
Christmas comes but once a year.

Oh the joy of Christmas time!
Happy mothers,
Fathers, brothers,
Sisters, cousins, strangers, friends,
Bid the angels hover near
With the peace the dear God sends
Fresh to mortals once a year.

Oh the joy of Christmas time!
Happy faces,
Sister graces,
Bend o'er little ones below:
Faces filled with keen delight,
How they brighten, how they glow,
As the pets their treasures show!
Glorious time of love and cheer,
Welcome Christmas once a year!

Kate Tannatt Woods.







THE MUSIC OF CHILDHOOD.



HEN I hear the waters fretting,
When I see the chestnut letting
All her lovely blossom falter down, I think, "Alas the
day!"
Once, with magical sweet singing,
Blackbirds set the woodland ringing
That awakes no more while April hours wear themselves
away.

In our hearts fair hope lay smiling
Sweet as air, and all beguiling ;
And there hung a mist of bluebells on the slope and down the dell ;
And we talked of joy and splendor
That the years unborn would render ;
And the blackbirds helped us with the story, for they knew it well,—

Piping, fluting, " Bees are humming ;
April's here, and summer's coming :
Don't forget us when you walk, a man with men, in pride and joy ;
Think on us in alleys shady
When you step a graceful lady ;
For no fairer days have we to hope for, little girl and boy.

" Laugh and play, O lisping waters !
Lull our downy sons and daughters ;
Come, O wind, and rock their leafy cradle in thy wanderings coy ;
When they wake we'll end the measure
With a wild sweet cry of pleasure,
And a ' Hey down derry, let's be merry, little girl and boy ! ' "

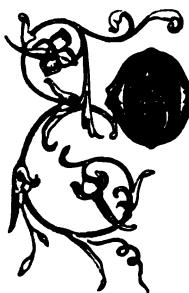
Fean Ingelow.







OUR LITTLE GHOST.



FT, in the silence of the night,
When the lonely moon rides high,
When wintry winds are whistling,
And we hear the owl's shrill cry,
In the quiet, dusky chamber,
By the flickering firelight,
Rising up between two sleepers,
Comes a spirit all in white.

A winsome little ghost it is,
Rosy-cheeked, and bright of eye ;
With yellow curls all breaking loose
From the small cap pushed awry.
Up it climbs among the pillows ;
For the "big dark" brings no dread,
And a baby's boundless fancy
Makes a kingdom of a bed.

A fearless little ghost it is :
Safe the night seems as the day ;
The moon is but a gentle face,
And the sighing winds are gay.
The solitude is full of friends,
And the hour brings no regrets ;
For, in this happy little soul,
Shines a sun that never sets.

A merry little ghost it is,
Dancing gayly by itself,
On the flowery counterpane,
Like a tricksy household elf ;
Nodding to the fitful shadows,
As they flicker on the wall ;
Talking to familiar pictures,
Mimicking the owl's shrill call.

A thoughtful little ghost it is ;
And when lonely gambols tire,
With chubby hands on chubby knees,
It sits winking at the fire.
Fancies innocent and lovely
Shine before those baby-eyes, —
Endless fields of dandelions,
Brooks, and birds, and butterflies.

A loving little ghost it is:
When crept into its nest,
Its hand on father's shoulder laid,
Its head on mother's breast,
It watches each familiar face,
With a tranquil, trusting eye;
And, like a sleepy little bird,
Sings its own soft lullaby.

Then those who feigned to sleep before,
Lest baby play till dawn,
Wake and watch their folded flower,—
Little rose without a thorn;
And, in the silence of the night,
The hearts that love it most
Pray tenderly above its sleep,—
“God bless our little ghost!”

Louisa M. Alcott.









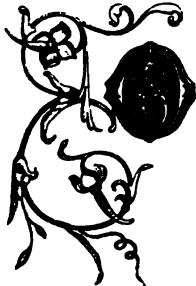




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ANGEL FACES.

A DREAM OF CHRISTMAS EVE.



LD Boreas sang loudly, one winter night,
When the curtains were all drawn snug ;
And Tabby and Ponto winked with delight,
Before me upon the rug.

I suppose I dozed in my old arm-chair :
I was watching the fire, I know ;
When, all at once, I was in the air,
As fast as a cloud could go.

And at my side was a dear little child
With the funniest winking eyes ;
And she said, " Dear Goodie, don't look so wild :
We are bound for a trip through the skies."

It was very wonderful where we went :
Sweet music seemed to float ;
And I sailed and sailed on, quite content,
With the child, in our funny boat.

"Do you know," she said, as we swept along,
"Where the lovers of children go,
When tired and old, and all their work
Is finished down there below?"

I frankly confessed I never knew;
But I should wish it to be
To a lovely garden, with birds and flowers,
And many a goodly tree.

My little guide smiled, and flourished an oar,
And away we sailed to the East,
Where we found a wonderful open door,
And a wonderful, wonderful feast.

There were children and children, great and small,
And all the dear little things
Were floating about; and, the best of all,
Each dear little soul had wings.

I tried and tried, but I could not find
The prettiest baby there;
For some had bright eyes, and all were kind:
So I gave it up in despair.

And I loved them all with a love untold :
So I joined in their sports with glee ;
And, the best of all, my little guide said
These babies were all for me.

At last, at last, I had time for all :
I could love and teach them at will ;
And those lovely children, both great and small,
Were mine for good or for ill.

To look them over, and feel quite at home,
I mounted a beautiful star ;
And all the babies, every one,
Came crowding around my car.

We floated and floated, and looked below,
Where my children were grieved to see
A brother and sister who quarrelled so :
My pets came troubled to me.

We talked and talked of wonderful things,
Of earth, and lessons at school ;
And then I found one dear little soul
Had broken the Golden Rule.

It made us sad in that beautiful place;
But I cheered them as well as I could,
And told them earth would be heaven below,
If all were kind and good.

So we sailed and sailed, my darlings and I;
Where the rivers and skies were blue;
And we dreamed sweet dreams in that world on high,
Which is waiting for all of you.

And we sailed and sailed, o'er a city fair,
Where the spires were touched with gold:
And all the glory I saw up there,
I'm afraid I could never unfold.

I can only tell, it was bright and light;
And my dreams were happy and true;
And I'll never forget the beautiful sight,
Or the home that is waiting for you.

Kate Tannatt Woods.







AT THE SWEETS.



H, yes! All the sweets at once,—
At once, at once!
Little ones, I am no such gray-haired dunce,
But I can understand ye!

Ah, yes! The cloying chase all join,—
All join, all join!
Jam, ginger, honey, comfits, *macedoine*,
And letting nought withstand ye!

Ah, yes! Fill your hands quite full,—
Quite full, quite full!
Tear down the vine whilst there are grapes to pull,
Not heeding it will brand ye!

Ah, yes! No time of course to wait,—
To wait, to wait!
Ye could not cease, and fight against your fate,
If I should now command ye.

Ah, yes! 'Tis even so with all,—
With all, with all:
Tried I to cross the stream in which ye fall,
In vain ; I could not land ye!

Ah, yes! Ye are not the first,—
The first, the first:
For sweets to surfeit we are all athirst;
Ay, I can understand ye!

Fennett Humphreys.







LITTLE WILLIE.



IS pretty feet upon the floor
 Make pleasant music in our ears;
His busy tongue awakes a smile,—
 A smile which sometimes blends with tears.

For while we watch his little freaks,
 And listen to his prattlings odd,
Our hearts recall another child
 That years ago went back to God,—

Stole back, and left our cot a void,
 A desert with no stream of joy,
Till, in its pity, Heaven gave
 Unto our arms this darling boy.

He brought the dower of daily care
 That every little nestling brings;
But then he brought that love and hope
 Beyond the purchasing of kings.

And daddy planted flowers again,
And mammy caught a happier air,
While granny, humming olden songs,
Wrought hose and lace for baby's wear.

Exhaustless stores of bliss are ours ;
And every fond embrace that's given
To prankin' Willie seems to bring,
In his return, a kiss from heaven.

F. G. Watts.







NOAH'S ARK.



ANY a story told,
Earth ! thy tale survives :
In a quiet fold,
Leading happy lives,
Dwell this old world's old
Fathers with their wives.

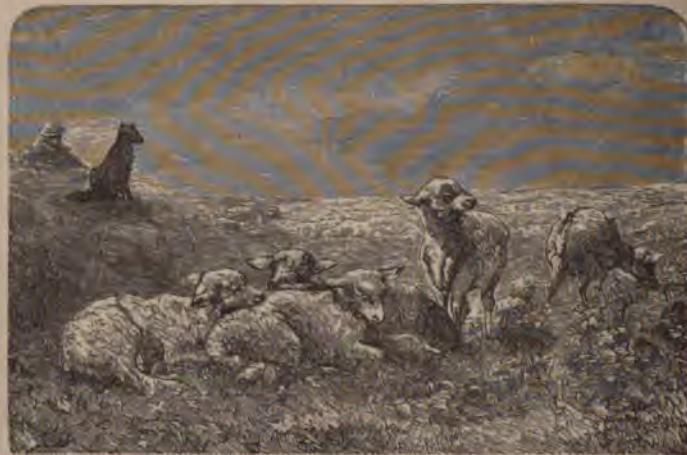
From the tight packed box,
O'er the carpet spread,
Oh, what peaceful flocks
In the firelight red
Wander, from rude shocks
Duly shepherded !

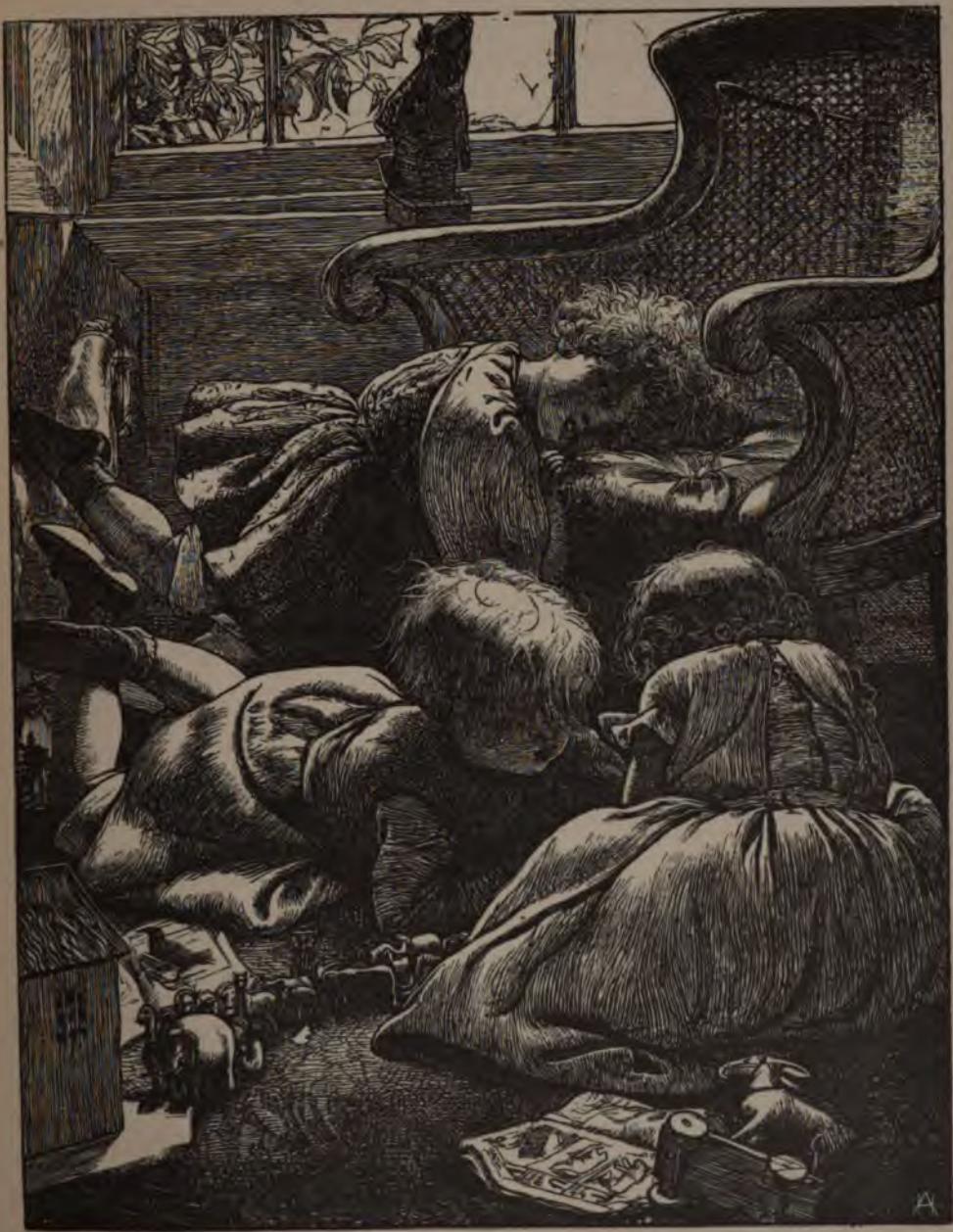
Loved with equal love,
Prized with equal care,
Raven then, and dove ;
But the dearest there
Are still the spotted ladybird
And the springing grasshopper.

Now does childish play
That sweet tale rehearse,—
Told by prophet gray,
Sung in sibyl's verse,—
Of a coming day,
Of a vanquished curse.

See the cow and bear
Together dwell and feed,
Ox and lion there
In sweet peace agreed ;
Wolf and lamb one pasture share,
With a little child to lead.

Dora Greenwell.









CHILD AMONG THE ROCKS.



UNDERNEATH thy feet are rocks, and o'er thee
Hang the heavy cliffs; and still before thee
Ocean stretches till it meets the sky:
Seest thou the white seabirds rising, falling,
On the breakers? Hearest thou the calling
Of the winds that wail and hurry by?

Dost thou watch the ships slow sailing? Nearer
Lies thy world, O young Columbus! — dearer
Than each far-sought prize;
Rich in joy, in wonder still unfailing,
Star and shell and glistening seaweed trailing
In the little pool that nearest lies.

Childhood's realm is rich yet straitly bounded,
Like a vale by giant hills surrounded;
 Lies it ever hidden, safe and sweet,
Warm 'mid sheltering rocks that guard and love it,
Heaven around, within it, and above it,
 Heaven beneath its feet!

Dora Greenwell.







HIDE-AND-SEEK IN THE WOOD.



IDE, hide, hide ! under the great oak-tree, —
Little Mary and Isabel, Tom, and Willie, and me,
And Baby grave as a judge, and still as a honey-
sucking bee.

Peep, peep, peep ! but let not a sound be heard,
Except the buzz of flies in the leaves, or the flutter of
startled bird :

They'd find as out in a minute if anybody stirred.

Hush, hush, hush ! they are seeking us everywhere ;
And Tray *will* wag his wicked old tail, and leap up high in the air :
If you don't lie down, like a good dumb dog, I will shoot you, I declare !

No, no, no ! for you love us all, poor Tray !
And you can't understand our hiding ; you think it is only play :
If ever I did you harm, my dog, I should rue it many a day.

Down, down, down ! where the long grass hides us well ;
How Will creeps round the bough like a snake,— or King Charles, at
Boscobel !

O Willie, man ! hold firm, hold tight ! think of mother if you fell !

Hide, hide, hide ! creep lower, close to the ground.
Tom, pull Tray into the hollow tree, and — there they come with a bound,
All six at once ! Ho ! ho ! ha ! ha ! So, the game's up : we're found !

Miss Mulock.







THE BABY BRIGADE.



HREE cheers, three cheers,
For the little volunteers!
Oh, what a **merry** sight it is to see them pass
Knee-deep in buttercups, and ankle-deep in grass!—
Tramp, tramp, tramp, as onward they go,—
Four jolly riflemen all in a row;
Sun-bonnet, felt hat, and tattered hat of straw,
The funniest shakos that ever you saw!
Three cheers, three cheers,
For the merry volunteers!

The flaxen curly colonel gives the word of command
To the stout little corporal who can scarcely stand;
And when the bugle sounds, and they march upon their foes,
The poor little fellow tumbles down on his nose;
And what with the laughter, and the cackling of the geese,
We're obliged to interfere to keep the Queen's peace;
And we've smiles and tears
From our gallant volunteers.

And smiling over all is the toil-worn face
Of the kindly old veteran that hangs about the place,
Basking in the sunshine, or resting in the shade:
He dearly loves to drill his baby brigade,
Fondly encouraging the soldier plays
That call to remembrance his own field-days ;
And he gives three cheers
For his little volunteers.

L. W. T.







LAW AND JUSTICE.



OW this is Mary Queen of Scots!
Push all her curls away;
For we have heard about her plots,
And she must die to-day.

What's this? *I must not hurt her so;*
You love her dearly still;
You think she will be good? Oh, no!
I say she never will.

My own new saw, and made of steel!
Oh, silly child to cry!
She's only wood; she cannot feel;
And, look, her eyes are dry.

Her cheeks are bright with rosy spots;
I know she cares for none;
Besides, she's Mary Queen of Scots,
And so it MUST be done.

Jean Ingelow.









HAYMAKING.



ANY a long, hard-working day
Life brings us, and many an hour of play ;
But they never come now together,
Playing at work, and working in play,
As they came to us children among the hay,
In the breath of the warm June weather.

Oft with our little rakes at play,
Making believe at making hay,
With grave and steadfast endeavor ;
Caught by an arm, and out of sight
Hurled and hidden, and buried light
In laughter and hay forever.

Now pass the hours of work and of play
With a step more slow; and the summer's day
Grows short, and more cold the weather.
Calm is our work now, and quiet our play;
And we take them apart as best we may,
For they come no more together.

Dora Greenwell.







IN THE GARDEN.



OGGIE dancing in the May,
Children merrily at play,
Granny never saying "Nay;"
Chestnuts flowering,
Leaflets showering,
Sunlight dowering
Its new-wed day.

Doggie urged against 'his will,
Children innocent of ill,
Granny mute, unchiding still;
"For," she muses,
"Age refuses,
Childhood chooses,
Such pastimes gay.

“ And it minds me of my playing,
Of my heedless, sportive Maying,—
Past with me, nor with them staying,—
When all prancing,
All entrancing,
I was dancing,
As glad as they!”

Jennett Humphreys.







AGE AND YOUTH.



INGS the poet, Crabbed age
And youth can never live together ;
Giving reasons fair and sage,
But false of trust as April weather.

Is there a sight more sweet to see
Than when the children, love-compelled,
Cluster round an ancient knee,
Mingling with gold the gray of eld ?

And, though so wide asunder lie
The ends of life, methinks I find
Traits of sweet affinity
That each to each together bind.

Middle age of limb is fleet,
Strong to move, and prompt to go :
Youth and age, companions meet,
Hand in hand come tottering slow.

Middle age has words but few,
Lost in anxious speculation :
Garrulous the other two,
And prone to endless conversation.

Middle age can take no rest,
Has no time for play or pleasure :
Whereas age and youth are blest
With interminable leisure.

It seems that thus to age and youth
Some sympathetic traits are given ;
And it is a lovely truth,
That they both are near to heaven.

L. W. T.







A STORY BY THE FIRE.



KIDS love to hear of children.

I will tell of a little child
Who dwelt alone with his mother
By the edge of a forest wild.
One summer eve from the forest,
Late, late down the grassy track,
The child came back with lingering step,
And looks oft turning back.

"O mother!" he said, "In the forest
I have met with a little child;
All day he played with me, all day
He talked with me, and smiled.
At last he left me alone; but then
He gave me this rosebud red,
And said he would come to me again
When all its leaves were spread.

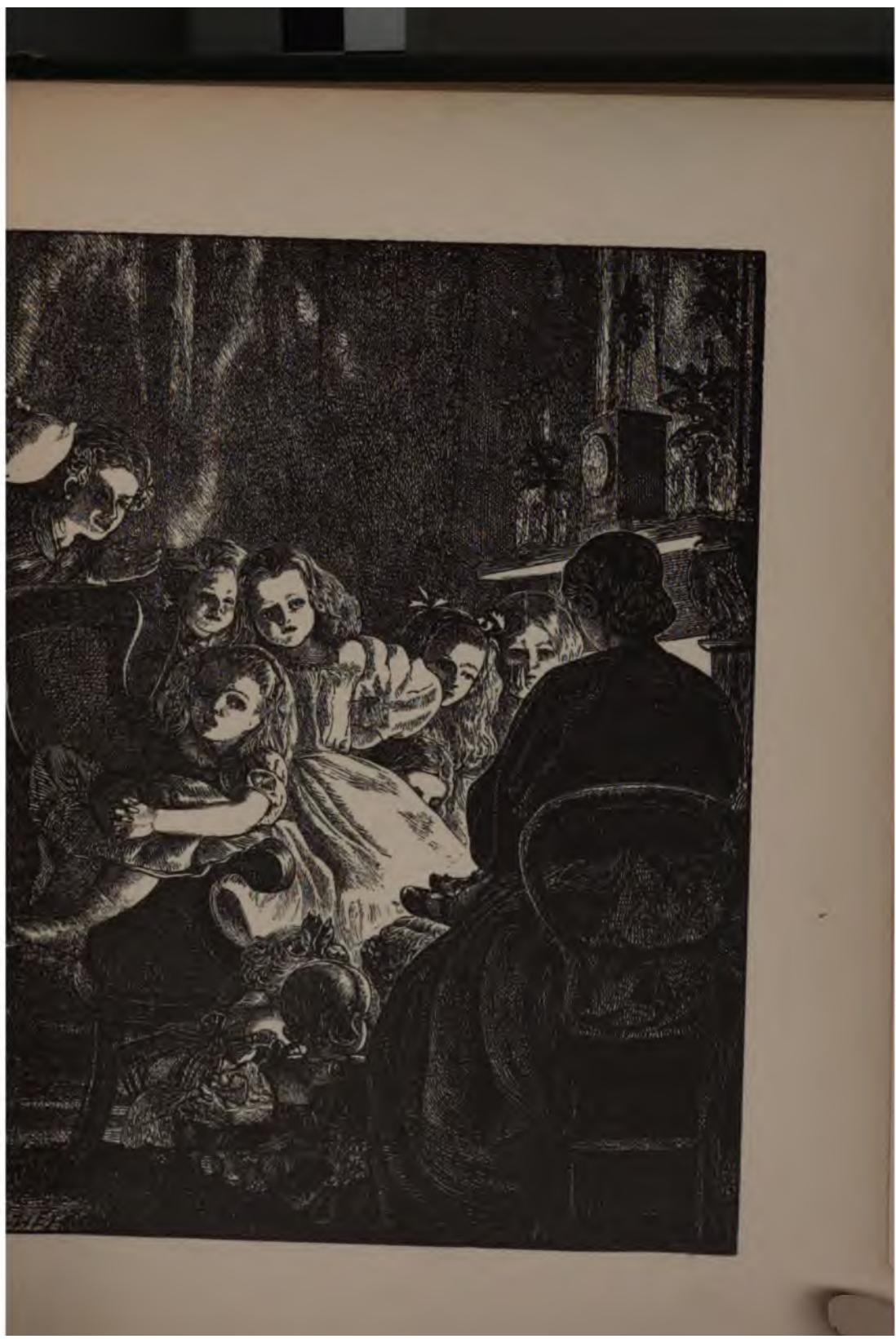
"I will put my rosebud in a glass,
I will watch it night and day;
Dear little friend, wilt thou come again?
Wilt thou come by my side to play?

I will seek for strawberries ; the best
Of all shall be for thee ;
I will show thee the eggs in the linnet's nest
None knoweth of but me."

At morn, beside the window-sill,
Awoke a bird's clear song ;
But all within the house was still :
The child was sleeping long.
The mother went to his little room :
With all its leaves outspread,
She saw a rose in fullest bloom ;
And, in the little bed,
A child that did not breathe or stir,—
A little happy child,
Who had met his little friend again,
And in the meeting smiled.

Dora Greenwell.







THE JEALOUS BOY.



HAT, my little foolish Ned!
Think you mother's eyes are blind,
That her heart has grown unkind,
And she will not turn her head,
Cannot see, for all her joy,
Her poor jealous little boy?

What though sister be the pet,
Laughs, and leaps, and clings, and loves,
With her eyes as soft as doves':
Why should yours with tears be wet?
Why such angry looks let fall?
Mother's heart has room for all.

Mother's heart is very wide,
And its doors all open stand;
Lightest touch of tiniest hand
She will never put aside.
Why her happiness destroy,
Foolish, naughty, jealous boy?

Come within the circle bright,
Where we laugh, and dance, and sing,
Full of love to every thing;
As God loves us, day and night,
And *forgives* us. Come, with joy
Mother, too, forgives her boy.

Miss Muloch.







THE LITTLE BUILDERS.

A THOUGHT FROM ST. FRANCIS DE SALES.



HE saint looked on the child, and said,—
“ All men must build : upon the sand
Or rock, with eager heart and hand,
All men must build ; but I—with thee,
Dear child, in thy simplicity
Will build in patience undismayed.

“ I will not twine for love a bower ;
I will not raise for pride a tower
To reach to heaven. What ruins lie
On earth ! and in the heart a cry
Will rise from many a palace old,
Become of doleful things the fold.

" But I will learn from thee, dear child,
The secret of all loss and gain.
Thou smilest when a careless hand
Or hasty step destroys the pain.
And cost of all that thou hast planned ;
And then unsaddened, unperplexed,
Content to see thy work in vain,
Art ready, with a mind unvexed,
From the first stone to build again."

Dora Greenwell.







THE ENEMY ON THE WALL.



OCK-A-DOODLE-DOO !

Is the enemy on the wall ?

Run to attack him, children small !

Bob and Kate with hoe and spade ;

Maggie half her flowers lets fall ;

Little Willie is afraid.

Cock-a-doodle-doo !

What a great, fierce, blustering bird !

So delighted to be heard,

As most cowards are, you know,

When they flap their wings, and crow,

Safely set above us all.

But the enemy's day is brief :

Kate will drive him to the park,

Like a second Joan of Arc ;

Robert comes to her relief ;

Robert, like a very Bruce,

Any weapon puts to use.

Only little Willie, dumb,
Hides behind his mother's gown;
Willie, lad, look up, not down;
 Danger faced is half o'ercome.
Frightened! such a man as you?
At a cock-a-doodle-doo!
Lift the little silly head,
And there's nothing left to dread
But a harmless cock, that's all,
Crowing on the garden wall!

Miss Muloc







THE CHAIR RAILWAY.



ESTURE, clatter,
Whistle, chatter,
Chairs in position, passengers placed
Progress shouted,
Late ones scouted,
No heed that they implore.

Noise, appearance,
Pomp of clearance,
Terminus sighted, course to run traced ;
Signals waving,
Tunnels braving :
All feigned ! But would ye more ?

Clamor, hurry,
Boasting, flurry,
Hope to proceed on vehemence based ;
Skill assuming,
Strength presuming,
Advance so sure in store.

No step gaining,
Nought attaining,
Stir and commotion, all of it waste ;
Train unmoving,
Weakness proving,
Held fast upon the floor !

No acquirement,
All requirement :
Nought but the bluster, blazon, and haste ;
Outcry failing,
Unavailing !
Ah me ! Have I done more ?

Jennett Humphreys.







THE STAGE-COACH.



OME, now, let us take a journey
That costs neither trouble nor care;
What if where we are going we know not,
Nor if we shall ever get there?
What matter? The road is so pleasant,
And we pay not a heavy fare!

What matter, oh! what matter,
Should even the coach upset,
And all the passengers scatter?
Such chances are often met.
Our driver might be more steady;
But we know that the best of all
Riders are those that are ready
And willing to meet with a fall.

Come quick now, and take your places :
The guard is blowing his horn ;
The horses are in the traces,
They have had their feed of corn.
London, Paris, wherever it pleases,
You may ride in our coach of state ;
We have no luggage to tease us,
And we carry but little weight.

Dora Greenwell.







“THE SPORTS OF CHILDHOOD SHOW THE
FUTURE MAN.”



AY, is it true, the line I quote?
Can boyhood's sports foretell,
As ocean weeds, that idly float,
Reveal the tidal swell?

What diverse features of the mind
Their boyish moods disclose!
One in his work delight can find;
The other, in repose.

One lies to watch the briny foam
Upon the rocky ledge;
The other scoops himself a home
Close to the water's edge.

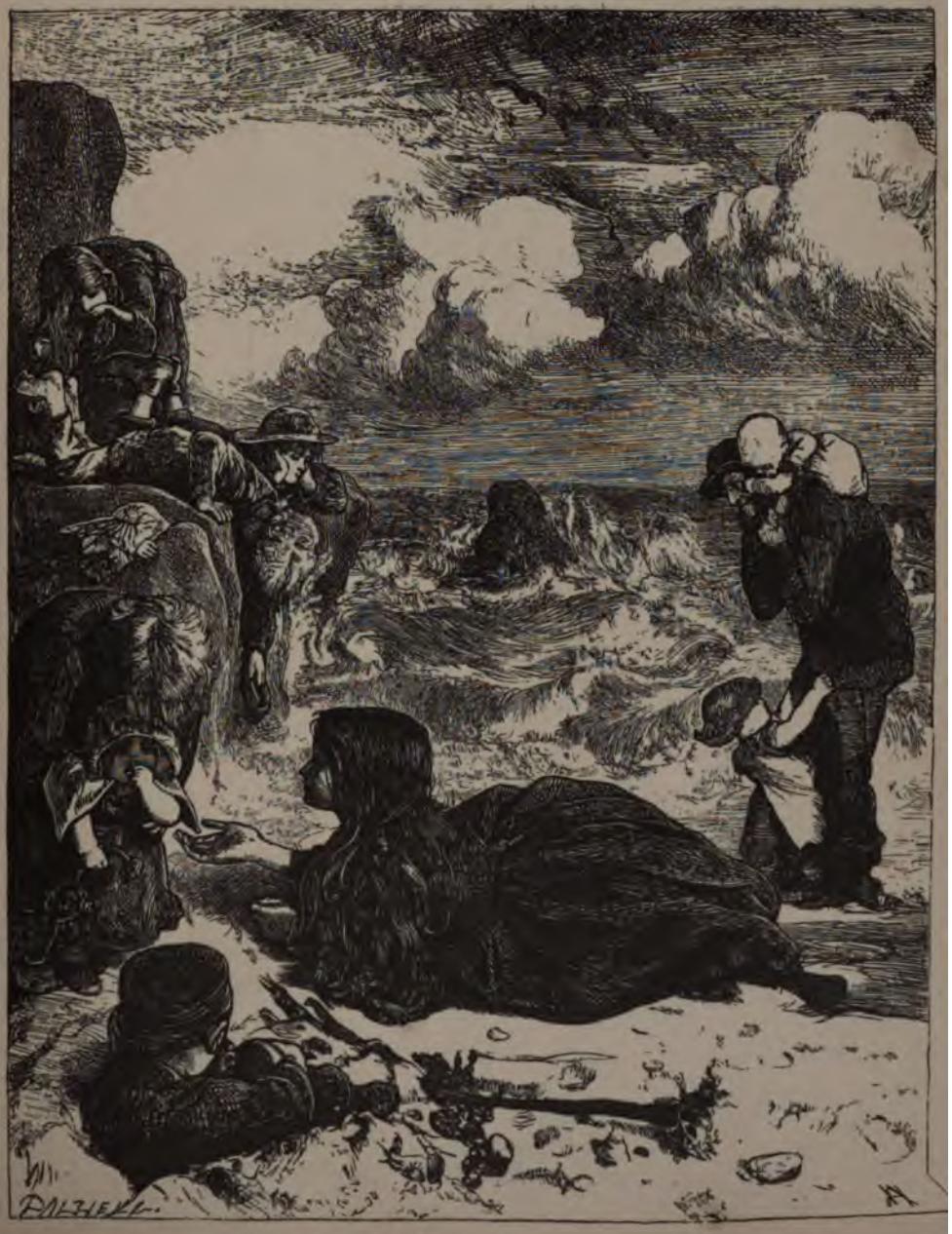
One leans a cheek on either hand,
In cogitations rare;
This builds a castle on the sand;
That, castles in the air.

But who the lot in life can trace,
Their future may bestow?
Or see on either youthful face
Foreshadowings of woe?

Rather for each would hope foresee
The path that suits him best;
And trust their happy lot may be
“Blessing, and to be blest.”

Anon.









BY THE SEA.



HOSE clamor mounts most high?—
Yours, little folks, with eager shouts,
With loud obtaining, and quick-born doubts
If holding mean enjoying;
Or the low-lain sea, with mockery
Of all this sunny toying?

Whose hands the fastest ply?—
Yours, busy crew, with earnest thrust
At castles' rearing, with saintly trust
In each frail work enduring;
Or the false-set sea, enticingly
To tombless death alluring?

Whose sheen does brightest lie?—
Yours, pretty eyes, with gleeful flash,
With open glance no memories abash
To sinister averting;
Or the cold-lit sea, perfidiously
Its guiltlessness asserting?

Whose tread will time defy?—
Yours, playful feet, with tricksome press,
With vaunted exploits of bold address
 To manhood's skill aspiring;
Or the sloth-paced sea, voraciously
 Its hapless prey acquiring?

Whose labor lasts for aye?
Each, little folks, the race must speed
Concerting; since pleasure, 'tis decreed,
 Is linked with pain destroying;
And dear mercies glide at horror's side;
And, with good, ills bide; and Life is bride
 To Death, her joy alloying.

Fennett Humphreys.









GRANDPAPA.



RANDPAPA'S hair is very white,
And grandpapa walks but slow;
He likes to sit still in his easy-chair,
While the children come and go.
"Hush! play quietly," says mamma:
"Let nobody trouble dear grandpapa."

Grandpapa's hand is thin and weak :
It has worked hard all his days,—
A strong right hand, and an honest hand,
That has won all good men's praise.
"Kiss it tenderly," says mamma:
"Let every one honor grandpapa."

Grandpapa's eyes are growing dim ;
They have looked on sorrow and death ;
But the love-light never went out of them,
Nor the courage and the faith.
" You children, all of you," says mamma,
" Have need to look up to dear grandpapa."

Grandpapa's years are wearing few;
But he leaves a blessing behind,—
A good life lived, and a good fight fought,
True heart and equal mind.
“Remember, my children,” says mamma,
“You bear the name of your grandpapa.”

Miss Muloch.





AT SCHOOL.



ANNOT you do your sum, dear?
Does it make you cry?
Move higher: let me come, dear,
And see if I can try.

“ Give the pencil here, dear;
Write this ‘three’ once more;
You have not made it clear, dear:
It runs right through the ‘four’!

“ Let us take this line, dear;
It will soon be done:
Fifteen are six and nine, dear,—
Five, and carry one.

“ Here are four and seven, dear,
Count up on your slate:
Yes, they make eleven, dear;
Now add figure eight.

“There! I see you smile, dear;
There! I take a kiss:
You’ll help me a while, dear,
For helping you in this.”

Right, you little kind one!
Love will perish never:
Years to come will find one
Clinging to you ever.

Jennett Humphreys.







THE SCRAMBLE FOR SUGAR-PLUMS.



ARK! that burst of silver laughter
Ringing up to beam and rafter!
How one's heart leaps and rejoices
At the music of those voices!
How one's eyes enjoy the sight
Of such innocent delight!
Laugh and scramble, shout and play,
Happy children, while you may:
Life soon loses its completeness,
Sugar-plums their pristine sweetness,
Dolls their charm, and nuts their savor,
And ginger-beer its champagne flavor.
Laugh, ye little lads and lasses:
Soon, too soon, your childhood passes;
Soon, too soon, you will be soiling
Hands and souls with baser toiling.
Just as you for sweetmeats scramble,
We for worldly prizes gamble:
Rank and title, place and power,
Fame, the triumph of an hour,

Gold that fetters, love that changes,
Friendship that a word estranges,
Fashion, pleasure, empty station,
Beauty, homage, admiration,—
These profane and hollow joys
Are *our* sugar-plums and toys ;
Slow to win, and hard to hold,
Dearly bought and dearly sold,
Seeming sweet, and tasting bitter,
Paint and tinsel, paste and glitter,
Fair without, and foul within,
Dust and ashes, tears and sin !
Alas ! I wish, but wish in vain,
That I were a child again.

Amelia B. Edwards.







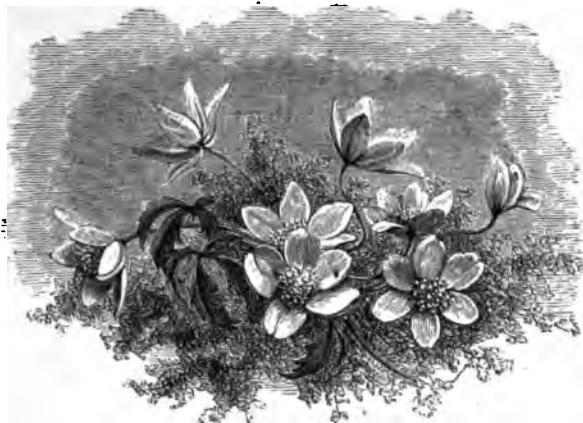
A CHILD'S GARDEN.



SEEK in the hill, and seek in the vale,
For foxglove, and broom, and heather ;
Seek in the woods for the primrose pale,
Seek for the hyacinths dim and frail,
And plant them all close together ;
Flowers that are bold, and flowers that are shy ;
The drooping bell, and the starry eye
That looks bright in the cloudiest weather ;
And fling in all seeds that twine and that trail,
To bind them safe together ;
Then plant the sunflower and lily tall,
Tulip, and crown imperial ;
With a blossomed rose for the heart of June
Set in the midst of all ; and say
A charm to make them come up as soon
As the mustard and cress that were sown last May,

And be all in bloom together,—
Emblem of youth's warm heart thick sown
With blooms that need fear no weather ;
With wingèd dreams, and hopes half-blown,
With flowers that love to bloom alone,
And flowers that bloom together.

Dora Greenwell.







TOY-MUSIC.



ELL! what can age do better?
Grandma moves the toy, and grandson listens :
Yet is she her nursling's debtor,
Though his eye glistens.

Say ! See you not my theme ?
Children teach us hope and sweet endurance,
Prove to us this life a dream.
Oh, blest assurance !

Hist ! As the sound brays out,
Discord fails to shock ; annoyance ceases ;
Melody plays out, plays out,
As doubt releases.

Hark! To the lady's ear
Promise flushes fast. "Since childhood passes
Sure to age, no need for fear:
Age will move to bliss from here,
That far surpasses."

Fennett Humphreys.







THE DOGS' CHRISTMAS DINNER.



HE church bells rang out one Christmas morn
Merrily on the clear, cold air;
They seemed to say, "Our Christ is born:
Come worship him here, both young and fair."

And by and by, when they slowly tolled,
A little fairy with golden hair
Walked up the steps with her grandsire old,
And paused in a pew near the chancel stair.

Her golden locks floated softly down,
Just kissed by a band of ribbon blue,
Which held it back, with a knot on the crown,
And left her bright eyes peeping through.

"The least of these," the old priest said,
And Bessie whispered, "The least of these,"
While she bowed her light-crowned golden head,
And whispered, "Our Father," on bended knees.

At last, when the people went their way
With words of kindly greeting and cheer,
Little bright-eyed Bess was heard to say,
"'Tis the Christ-child makes us happy here."

And again, when the feasters were happy at home,
 And grace had been said for bounty given,
Little Bess said softly, "The poor have none,
 But Christmas will wait for them up in heaven."

At the feast they missed the thoughtful child ;
 And searching without and within they found
Little Bess on the steps, where she sat and smiled,
 While the dogs of the household gathered around.

There was *Hero* the hunter, brave in the chase,
 And *Lion* the fearless, and poor, ugly *Pug*,
And grizzly *Towser* fleet in the race,
 And dear little *Snip* who lived on a rug.

From a plate in her lap, the little queen gave
 Each doggie a morsel of Christmas cheer,
While over her head, sat pussy-cat *Dave*,
 Half ready to die with envy and fear.

All over the steps the holly sprays fell,
 Even down to the feet of the little queen,
Who watched her loving subjects well,
 And declared "such a dinner never was seen."

They found her there ; and an artist drew
 The pictures at once, dear readers, for you ;
And little Bess said, "*Papa, if you please,*
 Aren't our dear doggies 'the least of these' ?"

Kate Tamatt Woods.





THE SUPPLIANT REFUSED.



COME, darling ! Best hadst yield :
'Tis only sowing.
No greater bliss was e'er revealed
Than glad bestowing.

Come, darling. Canst not give ?
'Tis over quickly.
Self-sacrifice will ever live,
And bear fruit thickly.

See, darling ! Carlo begs :
He wants a taste.
Give of thy cup ; ay, e'en the dregs :
'Twill not be waste.

Hey, darling ? *Want it all ?*
Hide not thy hand.
Take bounteous seed, and let it fall :
'Twill sure expand.

Nay, darling. Clear thy brow;
'Twill easy be:
The sweetest yoke, wilt soon allow,
Is charity.

Ay, darling! Longer years
That thou shalt live,
Wilt learn how wholly it appears
Happiness to give.

Fennett Humphreys.







THE QUEEN OF HEARTS.



HO is this advancing stately,
All in robes of fragrant white?
Is it not Queen Babe, who lately
Came to claim her sovereign right?

From the nursery to the kitchen,
From the parlor to the hall,
With her tyranny bewitching,
Is she not the queen of all?

Here we kneel, with hearts devoted,
Undivided court to pay;
Every charm is duly noted,—
Isn't baby grown to-day?

Could you find a child completer?
Tell me, Milly, tell me true,—
Rounder cheek, complexion sweeter,
Eyes of deeper, sunnier blue?

Is she like her little brother?
Do you think she's like papa?
No, I'm sure she's like no other
Than her *very* own mamma.

Happy mother! closer, nearer,
Revel in that velvet kiss;
Take your fill, for nothing dearer
Life can offer you than this.

L. W. T.







THE MOCK BURIAL.



HERE were no footmarks in the sand,
Nor, far as eye could reach,
Aught that had life on sea or land,
Look where I would, as, book in hand,
I strolled along the beach.

All, all alone! Ah, saddest word
Of human speech thou art!
I sighed ; I started ; for I heard
A happy, happy sound that stirred
The pulses of my heart ;

A sound of infant laughter, sweet
As wild birds' songs in May.
I hastened on with eager feet,
And found, close by, a rustic seat
That overlooked the bay.

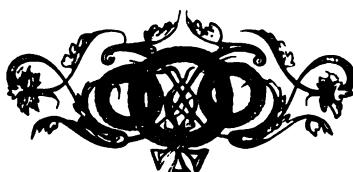
A lady sat there in the shade,
Her baby on her knee ;
Six other children round her played,
And, plying each a tiny spade,
Danced like the waves at sea.

"Die, Pilot! die! the children cried,"
And clapped their little hands. .
The dog, with eyes alert and wide,
(A well-trained actor) dropped and died,
While they piled up the sands.

Alas! how strange it was to see
The children in their mirth
Foreshadowing sorrows yet to be,
And mocking, in their childish glee,
The saddest toil of earth!

"Ah, me," thought I, "how springtime flies,
And troubles come with years!
How all these smiles must end in sighs,
And all the sunshine of those eyes
Some day be turned to tears!"

Amelia B. Edwards.





A





SNAPDRAGON.



Y! hands in leaping flame,
Faces lit with pleasure,
Tongues in loud acclaim
Vaunting well-won treasure;

Fire attacked unflinching,
Peril lightly held,
Spirit never quenching,
Courage never quelled;

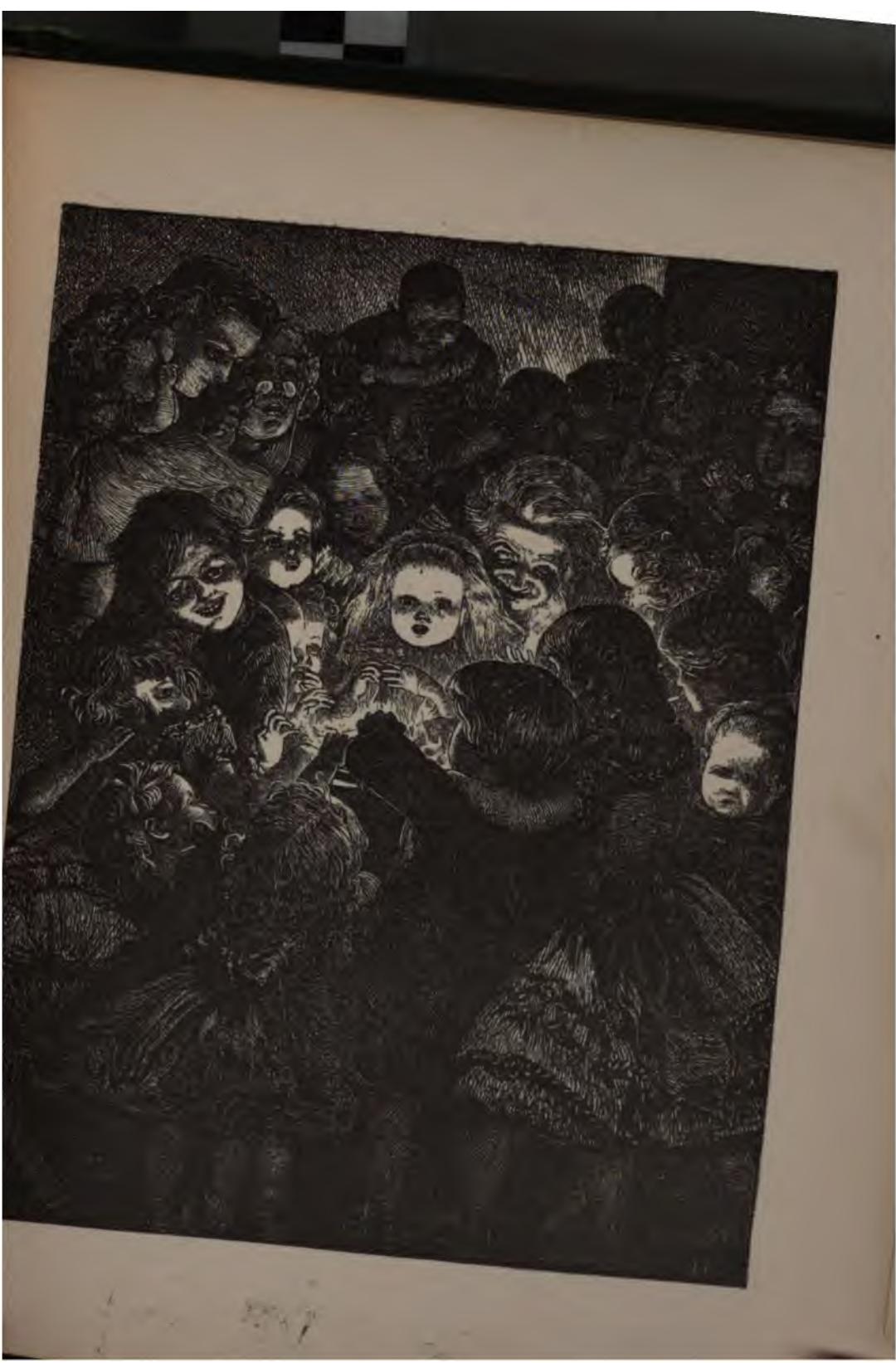
Scorn of passing pain,
Grasping at the spoil,—
Hope of sugared gain
Recompensing toil.

Thus, in far-off contests,
 Flames must be assailed;
Thus, for golden conquests,
 Danger must be hailed.

So, life's hill ascending,
 To fortitude aspire;
Since pains with bliss are blending,
 And sweets are reached through fire.

Fennett Humphreys.







GRANDMOTHER NODDING.



GRANDMOTHER'S nodding ; and, while she is taking
An afternoon slumber, the children are breaking
Open the bellows ; 'tis only to find
Out where the wind lives. Oh ! when you are waking,
Will you be angry, Granny, and scold
Over the loss of your bellows old ?
Or be proud of your children's march of mind ?
Hark ! do you hear the noise they are making ?

Grandmother's nodding : the earth has grown old ;
We see she is gray, we feel her shaking ;
All her strong secrets that she has hidden
Away from her children, they snatch unbidden :
While she is sleeping, what locks are breaking,
What coffers are rifled ! Oh, when you are waking,
Will you be angry, Granny, and scold ?
Or be pleased with the change of your children's making ?

Dora Greenwell.







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THE PLEASURES AND PAINS OF CHILDHOOD.



O you remember, brother mine,
That quaint old farmhouse on the Tyne
Where you and I were born,—
The gabled roof, the gilded vanes,
The windows with their diamond panes
That glittered to the morn?

And do you recollect the hill
Behind the house? I see it still,
All dotted o'er with sheep;
And, farther off, the solemn woods
Above whose leafy solitudes
Arose the castle keep.

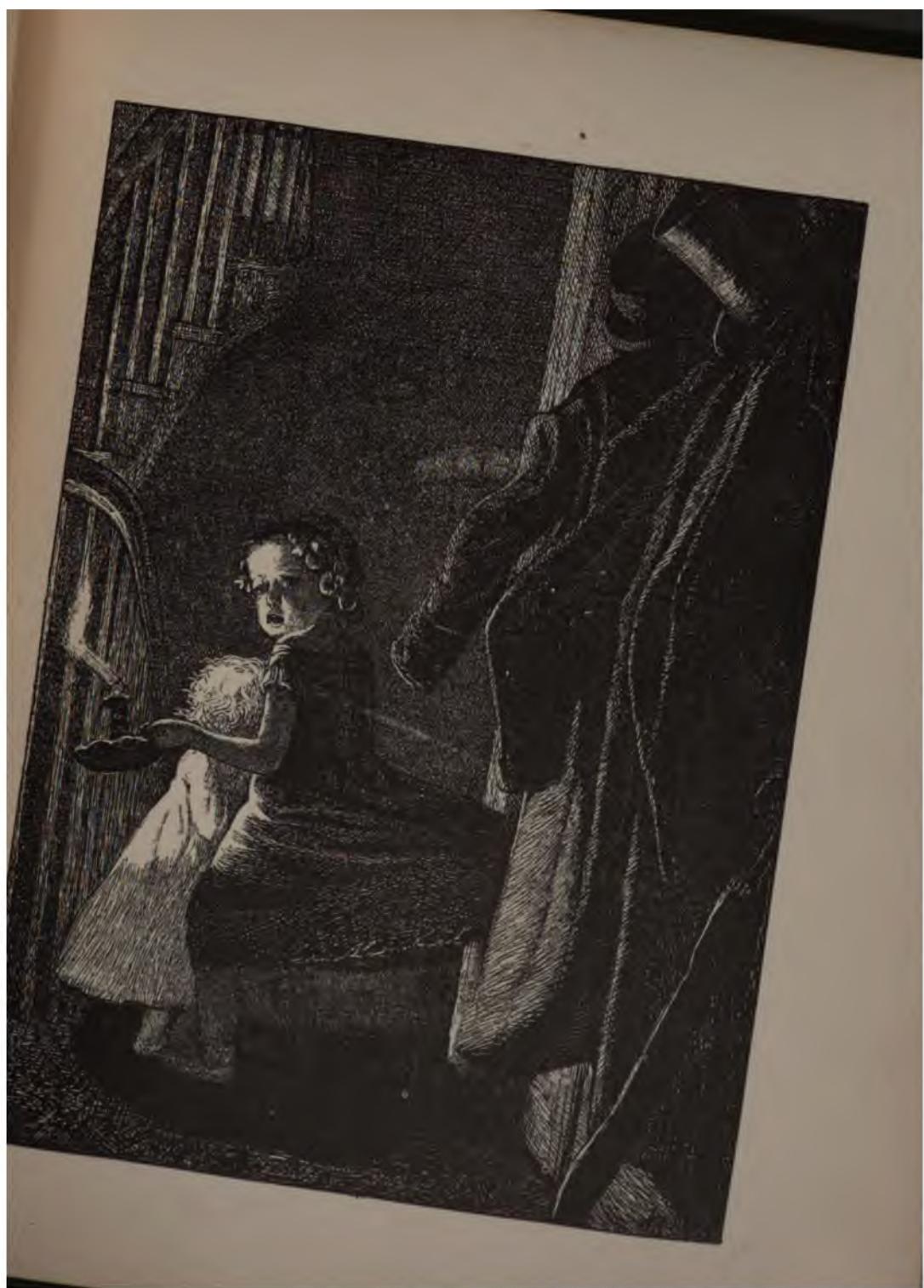
We thought an ogre gaunt and grim,
Who longed to tear us limb from limb,
Dwelt in that ruined tower;
And bitterly we used to dread
The gloomy journey up to bed,
When came the appointed hour.

Then all the giants killed by Jack
Lurked in the hall, and dragged us back,
Outside the parlor door:
Perchance 'twas but my skirt had caught;
But, oh! my horror when I thought
'Twas clutched forevermore!

Such is life's fickleness! The fears
Which cost our youth so many tears
Provoke our smiles to-day;
And tales, which then were our delight
When read by day, became by night
Our torture and dismay.

Amelia B. Edwards.







AN ENOUNTER.



NTREPID little hero! Unappalled
At Chanticleer!
By no demand of babyhood recalled
To coward fear.

Adventuring the battle, resolute,
Defiant, bold;
And hurling down thy challenge absolute
To right uphold.

Defiance to the hector-bird thou criest,
Warrior brave!
For passionate, stern victory thou sighest,
And wilt not waive.

Bright augury of future years this high
Audacity;
True forecast of stout dauntlessness in thy
Tenacity.

Rich hope of lofty combating I see
In thy proud eyes,
Fair dreams of dear and riskful gallantry
That never dies.

O boy ! But heed thy foe is worth thy aim!
But strike thy hand
If contests, honor would not dare to claim,
Men should demand ;

But raise thy arm for liberty, for right ;
And on thy brow
Guileless simplicity will ever light
As clear as now.

Fennett Humphreys.







■ ■ ■

THE SICK CHILD.



OW the trembling children gather round,
Startled out of sleep, and scared and crying!

“Is our merry little sister dying?
Will they come and put her under ground

“As they did poor baby that May day?

Or will shining angels stoop and take her
On their snow-white wings to heaven, and make her
Sit among the stars, as fair as they !

“But she'll have no mother there to kiss.”

We are sorely frightened,” say the children,
“Thinking of this death, so strange, bewildering :
Tell us, only tell us what death is ?”

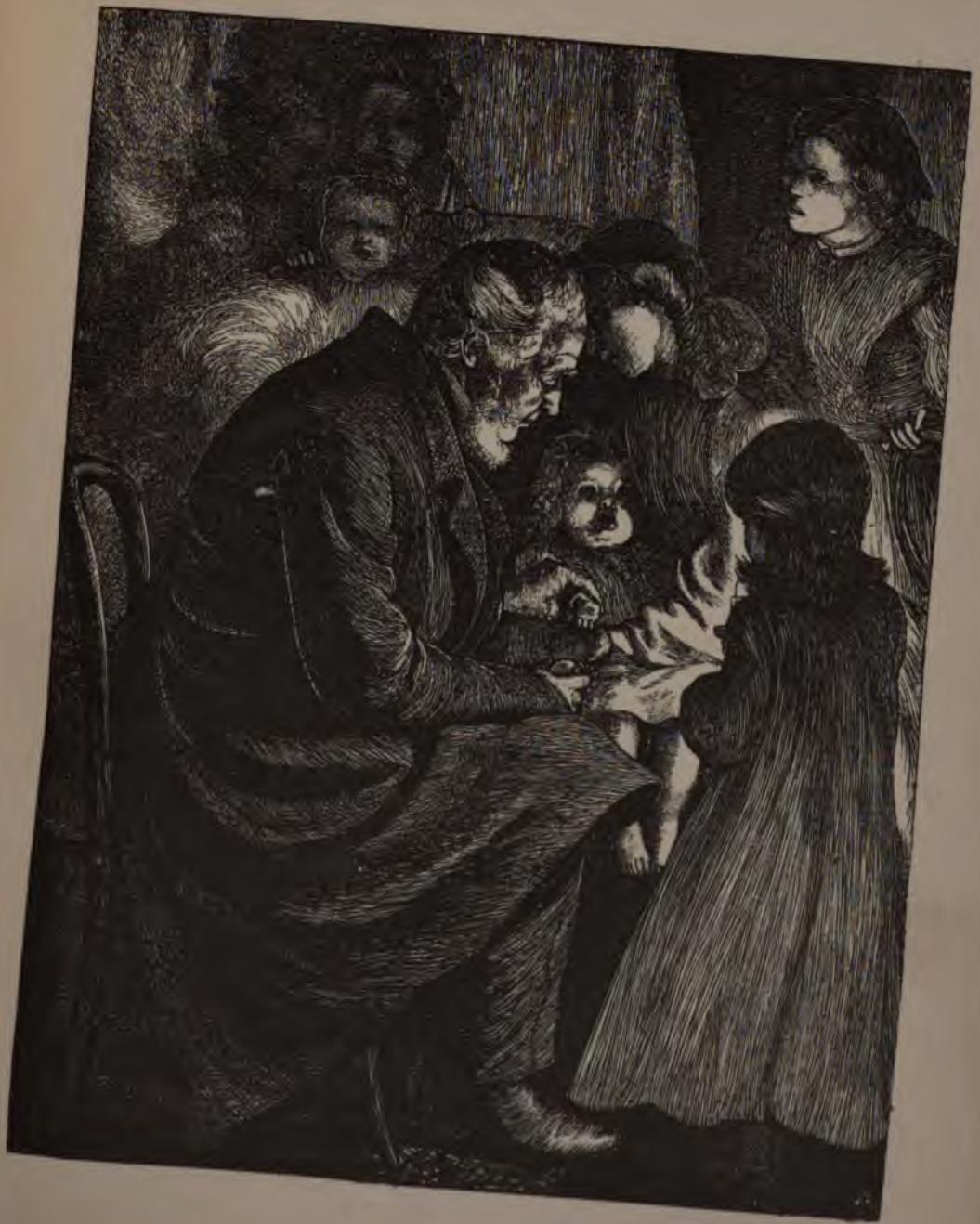
Ah! we cannot, any more than you :
We are also children of our Father ;
And we only know that he will gather
All his own, and keep them safely too.

So this death as sweet as sleep is made:
For where'er we go, we go together,—
Father, mother, children,—he knows whither.
Since he takes us, we are not afraid.

Whether little sister lives or dies,
Mother knows her safe, and stills all weeping:
Christ, who once said, " Lazarus is *sleeping*,"
Will awake us all in paradise.

Miss Mulock.







GUESSING.



HILDHOOD is the time for guessing.
Every morning brings unbidden
Some sweet gift half shown, half hidden;
Some kind promise seldom broken,
Some bright wondrous fairy token.
Oh, what stores are thine of blessing!
Oh, what joy is thine in guessing
At the hiding, at the showing,
Of life's daily miracle,—
Secrets in the wild rose blowing,
Shut within the cowslip's bell!

Youth, thou art the time for guessing.
Life before thine eager eyes
Holds each day some gentle prize;
And for thee, with fond caressing,
Still prepares some bright surprise;
Bids thee guess, and for thy pleasure
Hides 'mid flowers and leaves a treasure,

Gleaming golden ; and with "Follow,
Follow," o'er the sunlit hill
Lures thee, and through darkening hollow,
With a heart untiring still.

Life, what bringest thou for guessing,
In thy long, calm after-day?
Ever on our journey pressing,
Known to us both end and way.
Thou no more with us wilt play
At "hiding, seeking." Gone thy pleasing
Wiles, with all thy cheating, teasing ;
Bring us now some steadfast blessing,
Keep it firm within our hold,
For our hearts have done with guessing,
And thy secrets all are told.

Dora Greenwell.







■

CRADLE SONG.



USHIE, bee-bee,
Sit on my knee,
While I loosen the knot;
The sun is not set,
But my dainty pet
Must go to her cot.

She shall be washed,
She shall be hushed,
And rocked, and soothed,
While the snowy sheet
And the pillow neat
Are folded and smoothed.

No more overhead
Sounds the quick tread
 Of pattering feet ;
Play is all done ;
Little brother is gone
 To his slumber sweet.

So for baby too
There's nothing to do
 But to go to sleep,
While the angels bright
Round her cradle white
 Their watch will keep.

L. W. T.







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GOING TO BED.



T is time to go to bed."
Oh, how soon the words are spoken!
Oh, how sweet a spell is broken
When those words of fate are said!—
"It is time to go to bed."

Is it time to go to bed?

Surely bed awhile can wait
Till the pleasant tale is read
At our father's knee; how cheery
Burns the fire! we are not weary;
Why should it be time for bed,
Just because the clock strikes eight?

While they talk, let us be hiding
Just behind the great arm-chairs;
It may be they will forget us,
It may be that they will let us
Stay to supper, stay to prayers;
Go at last with them up stairs,

Hand in hand, with father, mother;
Kisses given, and good-nights said,
'Twill be time for sister, brother,
Time for me, to go to bed.

Dora Greenwell.







CRIPPLED JANE.



HEY said she might recover, if we sent her down
to the sea;
But that is for rich men's children, and we knew it
could not be:
So she lived at home in the Lincolnshire Fens; and
we saw her, day by day,
Grow pale and stunted and crooked, till her last chance
died away.
And now *I'm* dying; and often, when you thought that I moaned
with pain,
I was moaning a prayer to heaven, and thinking of Crippled Jane.
Folks will be kind to Johnny: his temper is merry and light;
With so much love in his honest eyes, and a sturdy sense of right.
And no one could quarrel with Susan, so pious and meek and mild,
And nearly as wise as a woman, for all she looks such a child.
But Jane will be weird and wayward, fierce and cunning and hard;
She won't believe she's a burden, be thankful, nor win regard.
God have mercy upon her! God be her guard and guide!
How will strangers bear with her, when at times even *I* felt tried?—

When the ugly smile of pleasure goes over her sallow face,
And the feeling of health for an hour quickens her languid pace;
When with dwarfish strength she rises, and plucks with a selfish hand
The busiest person near her, to lead her out on the land ;
Or when she sits in some corner, no one's companion or care,
Huddled up in some darksome passage, or crouched on a step of the
stair ;
While far off the children are playing, and the birds singing loud in
the sky,
And she looks through the cloud of her headache, to scowl at the
passers-by.
I die : God have pity upon her ! How happy rich men must be !
For they said she might have recovered, if we sent her down to the sea.

The Hon. Mrs. Norton.







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THE RACE DOWN THE HILL.



OWN the hill, down the hill, swift-footed little ones,—
Down the hill, Harry, Madge, Alfey, and May ;
I love to behold you, as oftentimes I've told
you,
In innocent pastime all tripping away.

The greensward is soft, if your feet should betray you :
So fear not the steep, but off, off with a will !
Your hearts will beat lighter, your eyes sparkle brighter,
For the health-giving sport of a race down the hill.

Away they go trooping, the gay little pixies ;
Age pauses to watch with a smile their mad flight,—
Some slipping and stumbling, one very near tumbling,
All laughing and shouting, and crazed with delight.

Now Harry, the oldest and strongest and boldest,
A jolly young Spartan, has slackened his pace;
While Madge and May, flying, pretend to be trying
Their utmost to make little Al win the race.

And Al, fond believer in each fair deceiver,
With pleasure and pride feels his young bosom fill,
When loudly applauded and lovingly lauded
For being first *man* in the race down the hill.

J. G. Watts.







THE SNOW MAN.



HEN old Winter comes, and closes
Summer's bright and golden door;
And the frost has nipped the roses,
And the violets are no more,—
Then the children turn from summer,
Grim old Winter to adore.

Fur-lined mittens, coats and sleds,
Take the place of boat and ball;
Clothes are piled upon the beds;
Skates are lying in the hall:
Happy childhood, ever changing,
With rare sport for seasons all!

On the lawn, young Ralph is building
Something which he calls a "man;"
All the children join and help him;
All must work, if work they can;
Even baby comes to furnish
Her small offering to the snow;
And the air is filled with laughter,
As the children come and go.

Out of balls and shapeless masses,
Comes a form, if not of grace ;
While the artist lads and lasses
Find for each a fitting place,—
Strange old man, with heavy body,
And a very doubtful face.

Unseen painters touch the children :
Cheeks are painted rosy-red ;
Cool and keen, the winter artist
Works with heart as well as head ;
All the sulks are now forgotten,
Not an unkind word is said.

Frost may bite the little fingers,
Toes may ache with bitter cold ;
Still the work is growing, growing,
And the fleecy balls are rolled :
In the trees the snowbirds twitter,
Looking at the snow man bold. •

Far aloft, the Snow King mutters,—
“ I have done enough to-day ;
Now I’ll rest, and watch the children :
I grow young while youngsters play ; ”
So the *Snow King* smiled and shivered
In his castle far away.

Then an oak-tree groaned a little,
As a breeze went sweeping by;
And an elm-tree called out, "Neighbor,
How work grows when children try!
We see charming things in winter;"
But the oak would only sigh.

Then the elm said, "Cheer up, neighbor!
Don't be moaning round here so:
It will harm the happy children,
As they scamper to and fro;
We must keep warm hearts, my neighbor,
Whether we see grass or snow;"
And a little snowbird whispered,—
"Dear old elm-tree, that is so!"

Kate Tannatt Woods.









OFF FOR THE CRUISE.

(THE COAST OF CORNWALL.)



HE moon is climbing up the night :
Yeo, heave ho ! and yeo, heave ho !
The little stars are shining bright,
While favoring winds to sea invite,
And much may be won e'er morning light ;
So cheerily, yeo, heave ho !

A shoal of fish is off our shore :
Yeo, heave ho ! and yeo, heave ho !
Then spread the sail, and ply the oar ;
They come to fill our empty store,
To glad the rich, and to help the poor ;
So cheerily, yeo, heave ho !

What though with danger sometimes rife ?
Yeo, heave ho ! and yeo, heave ho !
The fisherman's is a merry life :
A well-rigged craft, a loving wife,
And he'll snap his thumbs at care and strife ;
So cheerily, yeo, heave ho !

Then good night, Jane and baby Bill,
Yeo, heave ho! and yeo, heave ho!
And good night, little soft-eyed Gill:
For you my darlings, with a will,
Our hands shall toil, and our nets shall fill;
So cheerily, yeo, heave ho!

F. G. Watts.







—

THE FISHERMAN'S RETURN.



LUGGER beats across the bay,
Her hull is black, her sails are gray:
'Tis my good man returns to-day,
Merrily, merrily O!

Last night, a sad, sad mood I took:
The children saw it in my look,
And dropped the toy, and closed the book,
And all sat drearily, O,—

Till Kitty of the golden hair
Knelt down beside her father's chair,
And thither drew us all in prayer,
Readily, readily O!

And, when we rose, I put aside
Our lattice-blind; and in her pride
The fair moon through her blue did glide
Steadily, steadily O!

A pleasant sight it was to me.
'So sails his bark upon the sea,'
I thought: 'soon in our arms he'll be,
 Merrily, merrily O !'

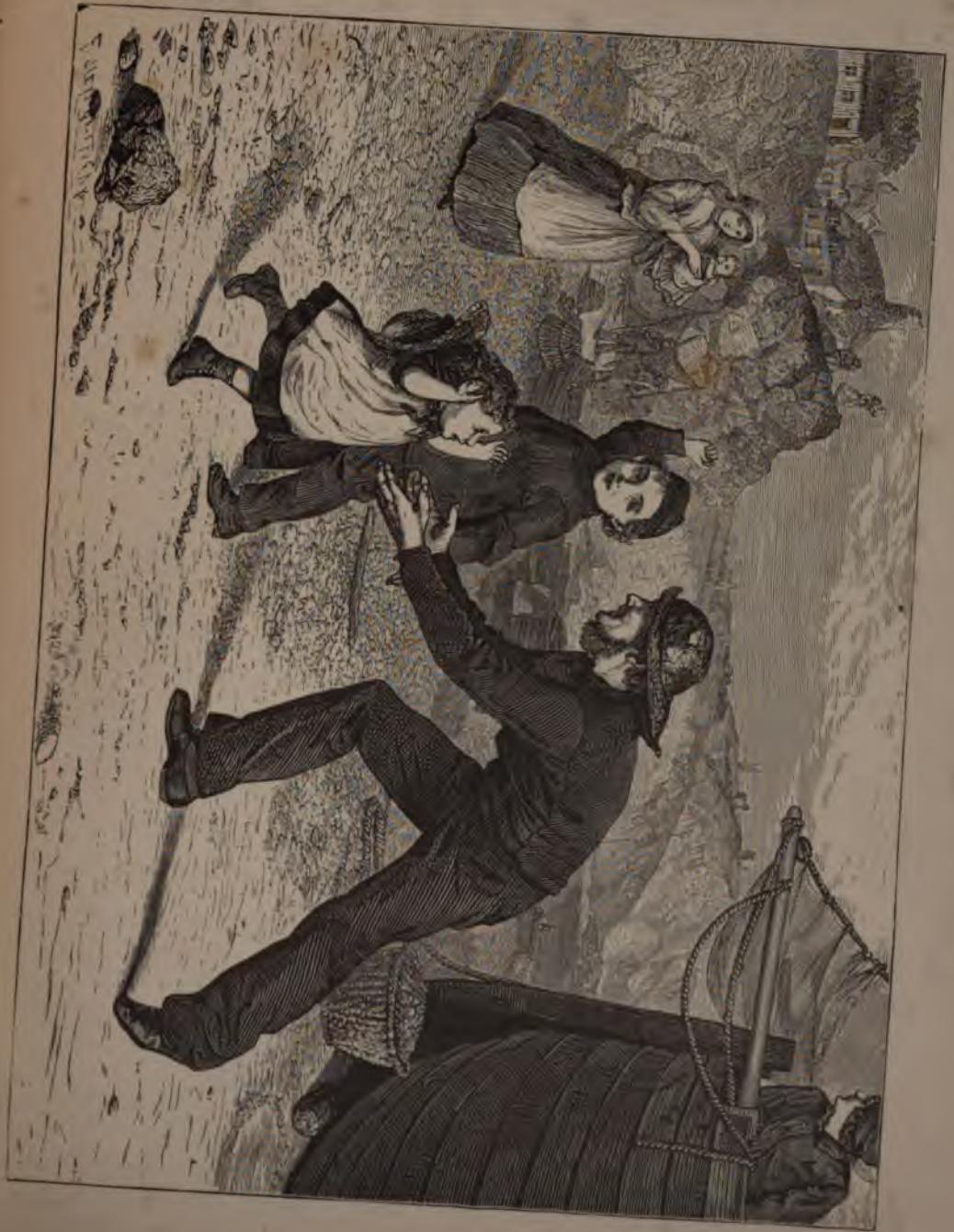
Then, Jenny, let's delay no more:
There's Billy running on before;
The lugger's keel grates on the shore,
 Cheerily, cheerily O !

There, fling aside your netting gear,
Pass baby to my arms, my dear;
Make haste, or father will be here,
 Merrily, merrily O !

And down the beach, where Billy led,
The fisher's little household sped;
And longing hearts were comforted
 Cheerily, cheerily O !

J. G. Watts.















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